

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/777,669

Examiner

Tan Le

Applicant(s)

NAULT ET AL.

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**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 10/20/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 2-15.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)           |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment                   |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br>of Biological Material          | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance  |
|   | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responding to an amendment under 37 C.F.R. 1.116, filed 10/20/05 which contains claims 2-15. Claims 1 and 16-20 have been canceled.
2. Claims 2-15 are allowed with the following Examiner's amendment:

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is required in order to make an examiner's amendment which places this application in condition for allowance. During a telephone conversation conducted on November 4, 2005, Mr. Robert Kalinsky requested an extension of time for 1 MONTH(S) and authorized the Director to charge Deposit Account No. 13-2725 the required fee of \$60 for this extension and authorized the following examiner's amendment. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 2, line 7, after "longitudinal direction, -- the spring release mechanism including first and second fingers configured to slide in the longitudinal direction between a locked position, such that the first and second spring arms engage the terminal end of the trough member, and an unlocked position, such that the first and

second fingers disengage the first and second spring arms from the terminal end of the trough member, -- has been inserted.

Claim 5, line 7, after "longitudinal direction, -- the spring release mechanism including first and second fingers configured to slide in the longitudinal direction between a locked position, such that the first and second spring arms engage the terminal end of the trough member, and an unlocked position, such that the first and second fingers disengage the first and second spring arms from the terminal end of the trough member, -- has been inserted.

Claim 5, line 10, after is slid from and before locked, "a" has been deleted and -- the -- has been inserted.

Claim 5, lines 11, after position to and before unlocked position, "an" has been deleted and -- the -- has been inserted.

Claim 9, line 2, after "having a" and before "body terminal end", -- first -- has been inserted.

Claim 9, line 5, after "a locking element including a" and before "spring", -- first -- has been inserted.

Claim 9, line 5, after "the" and before "spring", -- first -- has been inserted.

Claim 9, line 7, after "longitudinal direction, -- the spring release mechanism including first and second fingers configured to slide in the longitudinal direction between a locked position, such that the first and second spring arms engage the

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terminal end of the trough member, and an unlocked position, such that the first and second fingers disengage the first and second spring arms from the terminal end of the trough member, -- has been inserted.

Claim 10, line 8, after " a spring release mechanism", -- including first and second fingers -- has been inserted.

Claim 10, lines 9-10, after " with the spring", -- such that the first and second fingers disengage the first and second spring arms from the terminal end of the trough member -- has been inserted.

Claim 10, line 10, after "in which the spring release", -- mechanism -- has been inserted.

Claim 10, line 11, after "to release the spring", -- such that the first and spring arms engage the terminal end of the trough member -- has been inserted.

#### **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE:**

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

One major difference in claims 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 not found in the closest prior art of Bernard (US 6,450,458) is that Bernard does not teach the locking element including a clip having first and second arms with detents formed on one end of each of the arms to engage the body of the coupler (claim 2); the spring release mechanism including first and second fingers configured to slide in the longitudinal direction between unlocked position, such that the first and second spring arms engage the terminal end

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of the trough member, and an unlocked position, such that the first and second fingers disengage the first and second spring arms from the terminal ends of the trough member (claims 4, 9); a main body including a railway on which the spring release mechanism slides, the railway defining a notch and the spring release mechanism including a ramp such that, as the spring release mechanism is slid from the locked position to the unlocked position, the ramp pushes the railway and engages the notch to hold the spring release mechanism in the unlocked position (claims 5, 10) in combination with other limitations as a whole which is not found in Bernard either singularly or in combination to anticipate or render obvious the above limitations.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tan Le whose telephone number is (571) 272-6818. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. through Fri. from 9:00 AM-6:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert P. Olszewski can be reached on (571) 272-6788. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Re

Tan Le  
November 4, 2005

  
ANITA KING  
PRIMARY EXAMINER